

WHAT MAKES BLOOMINGTON LIVABLE?

DEFINING THE NEW LANGUAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONS ARE LIKE TRIBES – THEY develop their own languages. The language of planners and developers is being used more and more these days. What do terms like “smart growth” and “new urbanism” mean? Members of the City’s planning tribe explain their language and how it relates to Bloomington.

SMART GROWTH

Concentrating growth to avoid sprawl and creating developments that are compact, walkable, and transit- and bicycle-friendly.

Bloomington’s development policies have been smart growth since the 1960s. The idea of concentrating development on land adjacent to freeways was devised by Bloomington leaders who understood that if trips to these areas arrived and departed via freeways and arterial streets, residential neighborhoods farther from the freeways would be protected from traffic. The City is currently working on providing the compact, walkable, and transit- and bicycle-friendly aspects of smart growth.

MIXED-USE

Blending retail, office, hotel and housing uses in

close proximity to each other to reduce the need for car travel and make neighborhoods more interesting.

The City’s land use plans encourage mixed-use developments and even require it in some areas. A recent example is the Lyndale Green development at 84th Street and Lyndale Avenue, which blends retail, residential and public open space.

GREEN BUILDINGS

Improving a building’s efficient use of energy, water and materials while reducing negative impacts on humans and the environment through better design, operations, maintenance and recycling.

Green buildings are scored by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. Bloomington has a number of LEED-certified buildings.

SUSTAINABILITY

Balancing human needs with protection of the natural environment. A frequently used definition of sustainable is, “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Bloomington’s early leaders did a lot of things right, such as protecting the marshes along Nine Mile Creek and in the Minnesota River Valley and setting aside one-third of the city for open space. As the City considers ways to become more sustainable, Bloomington will continue to benefit from these early actions.



NEW URBANISM

Promoting integration of mixed-use development with public transit, pedestrian-friendly design and sustainability.

McGough’s Bloomington Central Station, *pictured below*, leads the way in putting all the elements together to create a new urban development. Two years ago, the City Council modified its land use plan and zoning code so that the Central Station model will spread to sites north and west of McGough’s 40-acre development.



“YOU’LL ENJOY THE LIFE YOU’LL LEAD IN SOUTHTOWNE”

RAMBLER HOMES STAND THE TEST OF TIME IN BLOOMINGTON

IN THE 1950s, MARV ANDERSON WAS A prominent rambler builder in Bloomington, along with Orrin Thompson and Vern Donnay. During a time when thousands of new homes were constructed in the city and the demand for quality homes was high, Marv Anderson was prolific, staying ahead of the curve by designing quality, affordable ramblers with more than 1,000 square feet.

Selling points included three or four spacious bedrooms, birch doors and oak woodwork throughout, Frigidaire built-in ovens, “Mr. and Mrs.” medicine cabinets, Waterbury forced-air heating systems with Honeywell controls and Formica counter tops.

To Anderson, each house was “more than just a number on a plat, it’s the place where a family grows up together.”

The Anderson ramblers were marketed with evocative subdivision names such as Southtowne Terrace, The Heritage and The Contempra. According to Anderson’s nephew, Bloomington Chief Residential Appraiser Mark Anderson, so many subdivisions were developed that it was no longer feasible to differentiate them by their

location. Anderson began naming them after family members and friends. Nancy Lou and Bruce Anderson (Anderson’s daughter and son) subdivisions can still be found in the city today.

The Anderson “first home” rambler soon evolved into the more spacious four-bedroom, bath-and-a-half “family-size” rambler, introduced in 1954 for \$16,795. Around 1956, in an effort to create more separation between the formal living areas and other areas of the house, the split-level home was created. Today there are more than 2,065 split-level homes in the city. The shift from rambler to split-level can be attributed to growing families’ demand for more defined living spaces.

Originally called the “Transitional,” the split-level home sold for \$16,000 to

\$24,000 and boasted separate living and sleeping floors, elegant tiled baths, garbage disposal, built-in breakfast counters and a lower-level recreation room.

According to Mark Anderson, his uncle Marv began as a carpenter and foreman working for a company that built prefabricated, mobile homes on an assembly line. However, Anderson soon became his own boss, building his subdivisions well into the 1970s. In the early 1980s, he sold the business to his cousin, Marlin Grant, who eventually sold the company to Pulte Homes.

Marv Anderson ramblers have stood the test of time. As they turn 50, ramblers are once again gaining popularity – a testament to the expert design, quality of materials and good workmanship that went into building these timeless classics.



You’ll Love A
Picture Book Home By

marvin h. **Anderson**
in Charming
Southtowne Terrace

His “Picture Book Homes” were marketed as the perfect first home for a family. Selling for \$12,990, they included three bedrooms and approximately 1,058 square feet of living space. Marvin Anderson began production of the homes in 1952 around 81st Street and Portland Avenue.